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Lynne Mattocks Lucas

CBC Newsletter

for members of the Carolina Bird Club, Inc., ornithological society of the Carolinas

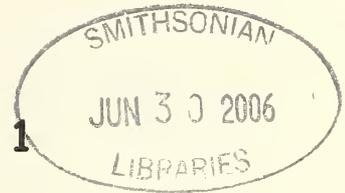
Volume 52

June 2006

Number 3

Come "Down South" to Savannah!

CBC Fall Meeting September 29-October 1



Where... Savannah? Isn't that in Georgia? Yes, Virginia, it is. Following the recent tradition of holding CBC meetings in excellent birding locales slightly outside the boundaries of the Carolinas, the fall 2006 meeting is scheduled for Savannah, Georgia in late September. This should be an excellent time for passerine migrants along the coast, and most of the "specialty" birds of the southern South Carolina/northern Georgia coast will be present.

From seashore birding at Tybee Island to "inland" birding at Savannah National Wildlife Refuge, from historical Civil War forts to lively nightlife, Savannah promises to be a true Southern birding paradise.

Join your fellow CBC members from September 29 to October 1 for a weekend filled with field trips, guest speakers, and of course the opportunity to socialize with friends from North and South Carolina.

Specific details on field trips and accommodations were not available at press time, but will be published in the August edition of the CBC Newsletter. Expect trips to the ever popular Savannah Spoil Site, arguably the best shorebird location in South Carolina; Tybee Island, home of an historic lighthouse and often impressive aggregations of birds; Savannah National Wildlife Refuge, home of alligators, waders, and flocks of passerine migrants; and many others.

For non-birding significant others, Savannah offers fine shops and boutiques, an impressive brick fort at Ft. Pulaski National Monument, white sand beaches on Tybee Island, and outlet mall shopping at the junction of Interstates 95 and 16.

Savannah is not as far as you might think, birders from most of North and South Carolina can make the drive in six hours or less. Hope to see you there!

CBC Spring Meeting Recap— Asheville, North Carolina

Article and Photographs by Michael McCloy

The Carolina Bird Club's spring meeting in Asheville, North Carolina was an enormous success with 184 members attending and 146 species seen over the weekend. Field trips included Jackson Park, Hooper Lane, Craggy Gardens, Beaver Lake Sanctuary, Cataloochee Valley, and Max Patch/Lake Junaluska, among many others.

Friday's field trips yielded Golden-winged Warbler, Blue-winged Warbler, Cerulean Warbler, Swainson's Warbler, Warbling Vireo, Bobolink, and Baltimore Oriole, among many others. A group led by Simon Thompson saw several Upland Sandpipers and a Willet at Hooper Lane on Friday afternoon.

Those who did not wish to bird on Friday had the opportunity to enjoy numerous species of wildflowers that were in bloom, along with several species of butterflies, which added another dimension to the trip.

A visit by staff members and volunteers from *Wild For Life: Center for Rehabilitation of Wildlife* highlighted the dessert social Friday evening. The program included information about the center, and visits by three owls and a hawk currently being rehabilitated and living at the center.



Northern Parula

Our official speaker on Friday was Christine Kelly, Mountain Non-game Wildlife Biologist for the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission, giving a highly entertaining presentation on Peregrine Falcon research in

the mountains of North Carolina. She included lots of data and statistics about how the Peregrine population has fared, along with an overview of the species in general. We all learned a lot about Peregrines!



White-crowned Sparrow

Saturday was overcast for a good portion of the day, but good birds were still moving about, with a Sora and American Bittern observed at Fletcher Park, and many good warblers, including Nashville, were seen on field trips throughout the day. We had the opportunity to dine at the Ramada on Saturday, with a buffet dinner being served from 6:30 to 7:30. Everybody seemed to enjoy it, and that is something that will hopefully be considered for future meetings as well.

Our Saturday night speaker was Paul Super, with the topic "Protecting the Birds of the Smokies: Avian Research and Management". Paul is the Science Coordinator at the Appalachian Highlands Learning Center on Purchase Knob, Great Smoky Mountains National Park, and has lots of hands-on experience with researching and monitoring avian populations within the park. He talked about what is currently being done to protect and manage populations of certain bird species within the park, which made for a very informative presentation that everyone enjoyed.

A big thanks goes out to all those wonderful people who helped organize and plan this meeting: field trip leaders, our two speakers, Ramada Inn, and everybody else who helped make this meeting into a very educational and enjoyable experience for all of us!

North Carolina Pelagic Trip Update

Many of us fondly remember our first pelagic trip off North Carolina and many took that trip with Brian Patteson on one of two boats, the larger *Miss Hatteras* based in Hatteras, or the smaller *Country Girl* out of Manteo. 2006 marks the introduction of a new boat, the *Stormy Petrel*. Patteson acquired the 56 foot craft last fall and began using it for pelagic trips off North Carolina in March. Many of the trips on Patteson's schedule for this year will be on the new boat, although some charters of *Country Girl* remain. Brian indicates the new boat is economical enough to operate that trips can be run with fewer birders than may have been required in the past, and the speed of the new boat allows for a nice combination of speed and comfort.

CBC Special Field Trip to Central South Carolina

By Robin Carter

I have just returned from guiding the Carolina Bird Club special field trip to Congaree National Park and nearby areas. We had a great time and saw or heard about 95 species of birds, without going to a marsh or lake. We stayed in Sumter, SC, which is fairly close to Congaree National Park and very close to the other main destinations for the weekend, Manchester State Forest and Longleaf Pine Heritage Preserve. The weather was good on Saturday, but this morning (Sunday) we had a period of hard rain, which disrupted the trip.

We left Sumter at 5:30 AM (ouch!) Saturday morning, in order to be at a Red-cockaded Woodpecker cluster in Manchester State Forest at dawn. We were rewarded by great looks at a Red-cockaded Woodpecker for about 10 minutes as it flew from tree to tree near its roost tree. Later we went down to the floodplain of the Wateree River (the Beidler Tract of Manchester State Forest). Here a Swainson's Warbler responded to our recording playback by perching in the open for about 3 minutes, singing all the while. It was one of the best looks that I have ever had at a Swainson's Warbler.

After walking on an old hunt club road into the floodplain for a while, we went to the agricultural area near Wedgefield, where Lloyd Moon discovered the July congregation of Swallow-tailed Kites a few years ago. We saw no kites there, but did encounter several hundred Bobolinks. We spent some time trying to get a look at one of the local Painted Buntings, but only heard them at Wedgefield.

From the Wedgefield area we went to an agricultural area near Eastover in Richland County. Here we got glimpses of a pair of Painted Buntings, and we got excellent looks at about 7 Mississippi Kites as they kited over some grain fields.

We then drove to nearby Congaree National Park for a picnic lunch and a short hike into the floodplain after lunch. We got a good look at a migrant Ovenbird, but were unable to get more than a glimpse of a singing Kentucky Warbler. The Prothonotary Warblers at Congaree were very impressive.

From the main part of Congaree National Park we drove over to the US 601 bridge over the Congaree River, where we were able to admire the Barn and Cliff Swallows that

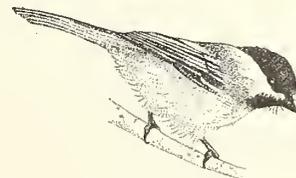
are nesting under the bridge. Then we returned to Sumter.

A small group of hard-core birders accompanied me on an evening trip to Manchester State Forest, where we searched for Chuck-will's-widows on the back roads. We did not see any goatsucker on the roads, but we heard 28 Chuck-will's-widows and 4 Whip-poor-wills calling, some very close to the road.

Sunday morning, despite the threat of hard rain, we left Sumter at 7:30 AM. First we explored the agricultural lands along Bethany Road, just south of the village of Mayesville. We saw a couple of Loggerhead Shrikes and got glimpses of Horned Larks over the corn fields. We got great telescope views of Grasshopper Sparrows on the roadsides, and also found another large flock of Bobolinks.

As the rain was beginning we drove up to Lynchburg Savanna Heritage Preserve in nearby Lee County. Since there was some lightning, and since the rain looked like it might keep up all day I declared the field trip over. Some of us stayed around, and in about a half hour the rain let up. The few participants that remained came with me over to Longleaf Pine Heritage Preserve, which is five miles from Lynchburg Savanna Heritage Preserve. We were able to take advantage of an hour-long break in the rain and hiked in to the savanna at Longleaf Pine HP. We saw lots of birds, including a pair of Red-cockaded Woodpeckers that appeared to be attending a nest and a good look at a Bachman's Sparrow. The best bird was a migrant Willow Flycatcher, which we heard calling ("fitz-bew") and which we studied for several minutes. We were able to get back to the cars before the skies opened up again.

We had a great weekend, getting some good looks at a few specialty birds.



Lynne Mattocks
Lucas

Birding Aruba: Parakeets, Seabirds and More!

By Steve Shultz

Millions of U.S. citizens visit Aruba each year, either by travel directly to the island, or as day stops on Caribbean cruises. Aruba attracts visitors due to its location outside the "hurricane belt", its relatively modern infrastructure, and dependable weather. Owing to Aruba's location in the easterly trade winds, the cactus-covered island only receives approximately 20 inches of rainfall each year, thus providing a seemingly endless chain of sunny days. The island's small size (some twenty by nine miles) allows for birding the entire island in a relatively short period of time. Even birders arriving by cruise ship can see a number of island specialties and still be back on board in time for dinner.

Aruba is situated in the southern Caribbean Sea just 16 miles from the Venezuelan coast. A self-governing member of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Aruba sports a relatively small bird list (some 200 species) and has no endemic species, but provides the visiting birder with an opportunity to sample Caribbean and South American bird life, as well as view breeding colonies of seabirds. Species often sought after by visitors include Caribbean Coot, Bare-eyed Pigeon, Eared Dove, Brown-throated Parakeet, Ruby-topaz Hummingbird, and Troupial (the "national bird"). On a recent day-stop in Aruba we enjoyed the aforementioned species, and more, by renting a Jeep and

taking a self-driving tour of the island. Car rentals are easy to come by, and gasoline is abundant, though not necessarily inexpensive.

Our first stop upon leaving the capital city of Oranjestad was the Bubali Bird Sanctuary, a working wastewater treatment facility made birder friendly. The wetlands, rare on a semi-arid island, attract numbers of birds including Neotropical

Cormorants, Caribbean Coots, Caribbean Martins, "Mangrove" Yellow Warblers, and marauding flocks of noisy Brown-throated Parakeets. An



Birding Tower at Bubali

observation tower allows visitors to scan the impoundments for residents, wintering waterfowl, and soaring swift and swallows. Bubali also contains areas of thorn scrub, home to numerous passerine species, and to seemingly thousands of

(continued)

New Members

Lee Adams
Fredericksburg, VA

Anne Marie Arendes
Asheville, NC

Donald Baker
Murrells Inlet, SC

Richard Brown
Franklinton, NC

Margaret Carney
Kure Beach, NC

Bill Duston
Charlotte, NC

Beverly and Patrick Gilmore
St. Matthews, SC

Bill Grow
Marion, NC

Walter Harriman
Stella Plummer-Harriman
Greenville, SC

Donald Jewell
Westminster, MD

Julie Keefer
Raleigh, NC

Anne Kellett
Fountain Inn, SC

Brenda Kramar
Kyle Rice
Columbia, SC

Patrick and Jocelyn
McLaughlin
Charlotte, NC

Joseph Meyer
Martha Smith
Asheville, NC

Ron & Melissa Mitchell
Raleigh, NC

Tom and Barbara Morgan
Hendersonville, NC

Barbara Mueller
Skyland, NC

Terry O'Nele
Asheville, NC

Robin Peterson
Demorest, GA

Dorothy Pugh
Karl Gottschalk
Durham, NC

Paul and Barbara Serridge
Greenville, SC

Nancy L. Smith
Columbia, SC

Ellen Sutliff
Wilmington, NC

Mike Swaim
Pam Isner
Efland, NC

Amber Swicegood
Lexington, KY

The Compleat Naturalist
Asheville, NC

Larry & Sue Wilson
Wake Forest, NC

Deceased Member

Nelson Gibson, Jr.
Laurinburg, NC

Birding Aruba *continued*

Aruban Whiptail Lizards, comical, bright blue reptiles that seem to “wave” at visitors with their front feet.



Aruban Thorn Scrub

Leaving Bubali we continued clockwise around the island, leaving paved roads behind at the California Lighthouse on Aruba's western tip, and relying on the Jeep to take us along the wild and rugged north coast. Near the California Lighthouse a golf course provides habitat for the Aruban sub-species of Burrowing Owl, and the large retention pond for irrigation attracts shorebirds, waders, and loafing terns, including the “Cayenne” Sandwich Tern. The scrub along the north shore is home to birds of open land including the Crested Caracara, Troupial, Common Ground Dove, and American Kestrel. In addition to birding opportunities, visitors enjoy natural arches created by pounding surf, the ruins of gold mines once built to extract the precious metal from the dry earth, and panoramic views of the island's low rolling hills.

Stopping briefly at Ayo Rocks, a jumble of massive boulders seemingly left strewn across the landscape by giants, we met the Ruby-topaz Hummingbird, more flocks of Brown-throated Parakeets, and singing Tropical Mockingbirds. From here we traveled a short distance to Arikok National Park, which covers some 18% of the island. The park offers miles of open space, hiking trails to the island's highest point at 617 feet, and opportunities to find species such as Troupial, Brown-crested Flycatcher, Scrub Flycatcher, and the brilliant, but non-native, Saffron Finch.

Birders interested in seeing seabirds can find opportunities to view breeding colonies, albeit distantly, during breeding season. While visiting Baby Beach on the island's south-east end, we thrilled to the spectacle of thousands of Sooty Terns and smaller numbers of Brown Noddies flying to and from colonies just offshore. This part of the island also houses what was once the world's largest oil refinery, now operated by Valero. The juxtaposition of belching smokestacks and tern colonies seems strange, but the birds don't seem to mind!

In only a few hours of birding we tallied some 45 species of birds, which is not bad for an island with such a small overall list. Those wishing to bird Aruba may find helpful information at www.arubabirds.com.

CBC Bonus Field Trips

Bonus Field Trips are open only to CBC members in good standing (i.e., your dues must be paid up). Would you like to go on a field trip but aren't a CBC member? It is perfectly OK to join the CBC at the same time you register for a field trip.

The New River, NC June 10

The New River is home to some 90+ breeding species including most of our flycatchers, both orioles, Warbling Vireo, and cuckoos. Warblers are well represented including Golden-winged, Yellow, Chestnut-sided, Prairie, and Yellow-breasted Chat. We will bird areas along the river as well as some of the beautiful New River State Park system. Curtis Smalling, Mountain Biologist for Audubon NC, will lead the trip.

We'll meet at the Ingles parking lot in West Jefferson at 7 am (60 Ashemont Drive, off US-221 BR/NC-194). Cost is \$10 and limited to 15 participants. There are many hotels to choose from in the Boone area or the Nation's Inn in West Jefferson (336-246-2080) or the Best Western Eldreth Inn at Mount Jefferson (336-246-8845). Contact Dana at 630-453-8270 or srharris@mindspring.com before sending in your registration. For more information contact Curtis at 828-265-0198 or csmalling@audubon.org.

CBC Bonus Field Trips (continued)

The Splendor of the Oregon Coast Friday, August 11 - Sunday, August 20

Starting in Portland, we'll head east into the Cascades and around Mt. Hood (Clark's Nutcracker, Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch, and Mountain Chickadee). After exploring the coniferous forests of this beautiful area we will head south towards Bend, where we will again spend a full day (American Dipper, Lewis's and White-headed Woodpeckers). Other highlights include two days in Malheur (Trumpeter Swan, Western Grebe, and Long-billed Curlew), driving the beautiful Oregon coast towards Yaquina Head and Tillamook (Brandt's Cormorant, Tufted Puffin, and Black Oystercatcher), and a pelagic trip out of Newport (Black-footed Albatross, Rhinoceros Auklet, and Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel). Cost of Oregon trip is \$1975 from Portland based on double occupancy (Single supplement \$350). Price includes: Transportation by van in Oregon, accommodation, all meals, entry fees, pelagic boat trip, information packet & bird checklist, and guide/leader service throughout. Not included: Air fare to/from Portland, alcoholic beverages, laundry & other items of a personal nature. To register for the trip, or for additional information, please contact Simon Thompson at 1-866 253-4247, 1-828-253-4247, or Travel@birdventures.com.

CBC Bonus Trip Registration Form

Name(s) _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Day Phone _____ Evening phone _____ Email _____

Update my membership record with this address information. Remember to mail your membership renewals!

Enclosed is my check for \$10 for the New River, NC Bonus Trip. (CBC bonus trips need to be paid in advance.)

Club policy requires all field trip participants to comply with the field trip leader's assessment and requests concerning the physical ability of each participant to make or complete the trip.

I release and discharge (and will not make a claim against) Carolina Bird Club for injury, death, or property damage arising from my participation at this meeting and Club field trips. This release of liability is entered into on behalf of all members of my family, including all minors accompanying me. I certify that I am the parent or legal guardian of any such minors and that I am over 18 years of age.

Signature _____ Date _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Make check payable to Carolina Bird Club and send to: CBC, 353 Montabello, Bloomingdale, IL 60108.

**** Members interested in joining the Splendor of the Oregon Coast Bonus Trip with Ventures should contact the Ventures office directly at 1-866 253-4247, 1-828-253-4247, or Travel@birdventures.com, for information.**

Help Wanted: Birders for a (hopeful) NC Birding Trail Site!

By Jackie Hough

When the NC Birding Trail (www.ncbirdingtrail.org) begins to accept Piedmont site nominations in early 2007, Raft Swamp Farms hopes to be among the first to be selected.

Totalling 193 acres, the farm was purchased in June 2005 by my husband Louie and me, Jackie Hough, of Fayetteville. We have kept 43 acres for our own family farm. We are working with the Carolina Farm Stewardship Association (www.carolinafarmstewards.org), with the Intervale Foundation (www.intervale.org), and with the local community to create a nonprofit organic farm incubator on the remaining 150 acres.

Several 3-acre tracts of land will be available for lease to individuals interested in learning the art and craft of sustainable, small-scale organic farming. A large community barn will be built where heritage craft workshops and lectures of interest to the public will be offered. Also, seasonal events will be held to celebrate planting and harvest times on the farm as well as annual holidays.

In addition, there will be a pond, a bluebird trail, living hedgerows between all incubator farms, walking trails, and areas of permanent agriculture featuring a peach orchard, a Muscadine vineyard, blueberries, a wildlife habitat demonstration garden, an extensive herb garden, and a cut flower production garden. The old tobacco barn will be renovated into a market house for our organic produce.

The opportunities for birders? Everywhere on the farm! The property takes its name from its one-mile-long western border along Raft Swamp Creek, a tributary of the Lumber River. The quiet cypress-gum swamp connects ¼-mile downstream with beautiful Hodgin's Pond and its attendant waterfowl. The wooded areas leading down to the creek are a haven for a variety of Neotropical migrants.

Having just purchased the land in June, we have been working on the land and preparing to farm the acreage cleared by the former owners. Not much time so far has been devoted to birding the property. However, lists of "significant" birds seen on the site must accompany our application. Birders interested in visiting are welcome; we would very much appreciate your help in developing the list of resident and migrant species that come to the

farm and to Hodgin's Pond throughout the year.

Raft Swamp Farms is located in Hoke County, five miles southeast of Raeford, about 18 miles southwest of Fayetteville. From Interstate 95, take exit 20 at Lumberton, and travel northwest on Hwy 211 about 24 miles. From Southern Pines, travel southeast on Hwy 211 through Aberdeen to Raeford, then continue southeast on 211 for 5 miles.

For more information, or to arrange a visit, please call us at 910-977-0950. See our website at : www.raftswampfarms.org. Thanks!



Jackie Hough

Have you visited the CBC website lately?

Webmaster Kent Fiala regularly updates the CBC website (www.carolinabirdclub.org) with member photos, rare bird alert information, and more. If you have not "flown" to the site recently, check it out!



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Upcoming CBC Meetings

Nags Head, NC January 26-28, 2007

Western NC - Spring 2007

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srharris@mindspring.com

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4201 Sentimental Lane, Apex, NC 27539

919-779-2826, sshultz@nc.rr.com

Submission deadlines are due the 1st of January, March, May, July, September, and November.

Headquarters Secretary, Dana Harris, Bloomingdale, IL

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Rare Bird Alert: 704-332-BIRD

CBC Website: www.carolinabirdclub.org

The *CBC Newsletter* is published bimonthly by Carolina Bird Club, Inc. Founded in 1937 the membership is open to anyone interested in birds, natural history, and conservation. Current dues are: Individual & non-profit, \$20; Associate (in household with individual), \$5; Student, \$15; Patron, \$50 and up; Sustaining & businesses, \$25; Life, \$400; Associate Life (in household with Life Member), \$100 (both Life memberships can be paid in four annual installments). Membership dues of \$20 include \$4 for a subscription to *CBC Newsletter* and \$5 for a subscription to *The Chat*. Cost for CBC bird checklists, including postage: 10@\$2.50, 25@\$6, 50@\$11.75, 75@\$17.75, and 100@\$23.50. Submit application for membership, change of address, and payment for checklists to: CBC Headquarters Secretary, 6300 Creedmoor Road, STE 138, PMB 422, Raleigh, NC 27612-6744. Copyright © 2006. Printed on 100% recycled paper at Grass Roots Press.